

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O P 181205Z APR 77  
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INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY  
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 3593

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR NI CG AO MOPS  
SUBJECT: SHABA INVASION: GOZ POSITION ON NIGERIAN MEDIATION

REF: KINSHASA 3484 (NOTAL); B) KINSHASA 3464

1. FOLLOWING UP ON CONVERSATIONS REPORTED REFTELS, I RAISED AGAIN QUESTION OF MEDIATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER NGUZA DURING MEETING APRIL 16. HE SUMMARIZED GOZ'S POSITION AS FOLLOWS:

2. IN RESPONSE TO NIGERIAN INITIATIVE, ZAIRE HAD MADE CLEAR IT IS WILLING TO DISCUSS WITH ANGOLANS ALL OUTSTANDING BILATERAL ISSUES IN ADDITION TO SHABA INVASION. AS FOR SHABA, ZAIRE PROPOSES AS INTERIM MEASURE TO FACILITATE OVER-ALL NEGOTIATIONS THE STATIONING OF NIGERIAN OR OTHER MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE FORCE ON BOTH SIDES OF MAIN BORDER CROSSING POINTS; THIS WOULD ASSURE THAT SHABA PROBLEM BECOMES AND REMAINS "INTERNAL AFFAIR" IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANGOLA'S PRESENT CLAIMS. GOZ UNDERSTANDS THAT NIGERIANS CONVEYED THIS POSITION TO ANGOLANS, WHO RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO IDEA OF DISCUSSING BILATERAL ISSUES EXCEPT RPT EXCEPT SHABA. AT THIS POINT, THEREFORE, ZAIRE STANDS AS HAVING  
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AGREED TO MEDIATION OF SHABA WHEREAS ANGOLANS HAVE REFUSED.

3. DESPITE ANGOLANS' PRESENT INTRANSIGENCE, ZAIRE INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH NIGERIANS IN REALIZATION THAT AT SOME POINT ALL BILATERAL ISSUES MUST BE SETTLED BY NEGOTIATION. GOZ DOES NOT BELIEVE IT SHOULD ITSELF TAKE ANY ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES AT THIS TIME. TO DO SO NOW WOULD BE PREMATURE IN VIEW

OF NEED TO STRENGTHEN BARGAINING POSITION BY RETAKING LOST TERRITORY IN SHABA. BESIDES, PUBLIC GOZ INITIATIVE OR OTHER DECLARATIONS RE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED BY ANGOLANS AS SIGN OF WEAKNESS. INSTEAD, GOZ WILL CONTINUE TO WORK QUIETLY WITH NIGERIANS, MEANWHILE CONTINUING TO IMPROVE MILITARY SITUATION AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SUPPORT.

4. GOZ EXPECTS NIGERIANS WILL APPLY NEW PRESSURE ON LUANDA, AND THAT GARBA WILL GO THERE FOR THAT PURPOSE FOLLOWING HIS EXPECTED VISIT HERE THIS WEEK. GOZ BELIEVES SOVIETS ARE TRYING TO DISCOURAGE NIGERIANS FROM PLAYING TOO ACTIVE A ROLE BY SPREADING STORY THAT US IS BEHIND FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN SHABA IN SUPPORT OF GOZ. NGUZA IS CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT NIGERIANS WILL NOT BE DISSUADED FROM CONTINUING THEIR EFFORTS, OBASANJO AND GARBA HAVING PRIVATELY MADE CLEAR THEIR VIEW THAT GOZ SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE ITS MILITARY POSITION IN SHABA AND GIVEN FACT THAT ZAIRE HAS KEPT MATTER ESSENTIALLY IN AFRICAN CONTEXT UNDER OAU UMBRELLA.

5. NGUZA EXPECTS ANGOLANS WILL EVENTUALLY AGREE TO MEDIATION OF ISSUES INCLUDING SHABA, BUT ONLY AFTER IT HAS MADE ADDITIONAL CHARGES THAT ITS OWN TERRITORY HAS BEEN VIOLATED AND HAS THEREBY CREATED MORE POLITICALLY PALATABLE BASIS ON WHICH TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS. GOZ WILL BE CAREFUL NOT TO PLAY INTO ANGOLANS'S HANDS BY ACTUALLY ATTACKING ANGOLAN TERRITORY, BUT LUANDA CAN BE EXPECTED TO MAKE SUCH CHARGES IN ANY CASE.

6. COMMENT: MOST OF WHAT NGUZA HAD TO SAY ACCORDS WITH WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW AND HAVE REPORTED CONCERNING ZAIRE'S PRESENT CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTITUDES TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS. TWO POINTS, HOWEVER, ARE WORTH NOTING SPECIFICALLY: ONE IS THAT NGUZA DID NOT INSIST (AS MOBUTU HAD CLEARLY IMPLIED) THAT THERE COULD BE NO PROGRESS TOWARD TALKS UNTIL THE INVADERS ARE PUSHED ALL THE WAY BACK ACROSS THE BORDER, THUS LEAVING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE GOZ MIGHT TAKE NEW STEPS TO FACILITATE NEGOTIATIONS AT A POINT SHORT OF TOTAL MILITARY VICTORY. THE OTHER POINT IS THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THE CURRENT ANGOLAN POSITION AS BEING UNWILLING TO DISCUSS SHABA, WHEREAS THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR HERE HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD ME (REF B) THAT THE ANGOLANS HAD INDICATED THEY WOULD NOT REFUSE TO DISCUSS SHABA IF THE GOZ TALKED (OR AT LEAST AGREED TO TALK) ABOUT OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES FIRST. BASED ON WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES, INCLUDING EMBASSY LAGOS' READ-OUT OF THE FMG-PRA TALKS THERE, I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS REFLECT THE KIND OF COMPROMISE POSITION HE HOPES OR ANTICIPATES THE ANGOLANS WILL MOVE TOWARD RATHER THAN A POSITION THEY HAVE ALREADY TAKEN. CUTLER

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